

Spend, Spend—And No Accounting!

By FULTON LEWIS, JR.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17—The Crusade for Freedom is one of those superprivileged organizations to which givers may address contributions "care of your local postmaster." Radio announcements in its behalf are recognized by the Federal Communications Commission as "public service" announcements.

There are other official sponsorships and pressurings into which appropriate committees of Congress should inquire. For example, the Crusade is one of the causes for which all government employees are solicited for contributions, in a circular addressed to "my fellow workers in government," and signed by the President.

Participation is all but mandatory.

Inasmuch as the net proceeds of the crusade go to support the profligate Free Europe and its affiliated operations, I fall off the sled.

One of the early organizers of Radio Free Europe informs me that from the outset, it has been systematically manned by many confirmed Marxists, and for that reason he finally quit in disgust.

It operates its own fabulous empire in Europe, with an estimated minimum of 1,000 people there, not to mention an additional 500 in New York.

In Munich, it has built plush modern apartment houses for its staff, foreign and American, with parquet floors, modern kitchens, all furnished with rentals below the going rentals.

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GEN. CRITTENBERGER
The titular head.

for German accommodations, which are notoriously low.

WORST OF ALL, the overall management in New York is in the hands of a troop of rich men's sons, drawing fancy salaries for playing an adolescent game of amateur foreign intrigue.

If this business is serious, it ought to be in the hands of adult, serious men.

As it is, the titular head is a military friend of President Eisenhower, a retired Lieutenant General named Willis D. Crittenger, who was with him in Europe in World War II.

But immediately under him is the Rover Boy regime: the guiding principle of which is to measure accomplishment by the number of dollars spent.

With the folding of the balloon

propaganda operations across the Iron Curtain, the heads of that operation began scurrying about for some new ventures to justify their existence, and came up with what they call the Asian contacts program, and another called the book distribution program.

These I shall deal with later in detail. My point is that the basic motivation is to spend money, somehow, and to keep knee-deep in clover.

Purportedly, the Free Europe operation is a privately financed enterprise. It does not admit any backing by the CIA, financial or otherwise. If this is so, its records and finances should be subject to public inspection and public audit.

That is not the way it works, however. Any such suggestion is squelched immediately and arbitrarily, because of the CIA connection in Washington. Even Congressional committees are unable to break the sanctity wall of CIA.

But they may be able to, this time. At least three Congressional investigating committees are digging into the Free Europe story, and while its officials appear on the stand, they'll either have to open the books and receipts, or admit being a CIA man in order to get security clearance. At least, will spoke this into the open. (1957, by the New York Times, Inc.)



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More On RFE Fiasco

By FULTON LEWIS, JR.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 18—The Board of Directors of the Crusade for Freedom includes 12 distinguished public-spirited citizens, many of whom are friends of mine and some of whom are unhappy about the facts I have presented about Radio Free Europe, for which the Crusade is the fund-raising organization.

This surprises me because I consider my expose as a favor to them, not a criticism. Frankly, they are being had, and for me, I would want to know about it.

If criticisms come along, they are referred to the Radio Free Europe organization for answers, and the answers are pat.

One routine defense, for example, is that Radio Free Europe broadcasts must be effective or the Russians would not be spending millions of dollars a year in efforts to "jam" them. At first glance, this seems reasonable. On second, it is hogwash.

IN THE FIRST place there is no evidence that the Russians are spending "millions of dollars" to that end and no possible way to prove it.

In the second, it assumes that anything that the Russians don't like is fool, which is ridiculous.

The very objection to RFE, is that its propaganda line is to win the people behind the Iron Curtain away from Moscow Communism by persuading them to establish their own national brand of Communism, the folly of which is demonstrated by the misery of Poland, Hungary and Rumania.

Of course, the thesis is not to win the Kremlin, any more than the material to win complete independence and freedom would be. What "jamming" is done is therefore entirely understandable.

It does not follow, however, that the policy of the Free Europe broadcasts is what they should be, nor that they are anything but what they are accused of being—in favor of national Communism.

The fact is, there is no reason to believe that the Free Europe broadcasts are being heard behind the Iron Curtain to any appreciable extent. Their transmitters are all short-wave, and short-wave receivers in satellite countries are very scarce.

THE ONLY RADIO sets available for purchase are standard "People's Sets," capable of picking up the frequencies of the Communist government stations on the regular broadcast band. These are useless for short wave.

One top Congressional investigator who has interviewed literally thousands of Iron Curtain escapees and persecutees, informs me that he has asked every individual about Radio Free Europe and less than one per cent of them have ever heard it, or heard of it. Most of these didn't care. The others reported that they had no way to get it, and wouldn't take the risk, anyway.

For these results, Free Europe is spending an estimated 10 million dollars a year in Munich alone, and Crusade for Freedom is collecting the "Truth Dollars" to support it.

If I were a director, I'd want to know what is going on, and for my money, I'm doing my friends a favor.

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Balloon Propaganda Developed Slow Leak

By FULTON LEWIS, JR.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19. — The Free Europe balloon propaganda program with headquarters in Munich, Germany, widely touted as one of the big guns of the so-called Crusade for Freedom, ceased operations in October a year ago, after the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution.

It had 359 employees, of whom 268 were on the scene, and the operating head of it is a pleasant young man named Samuel S. Walker, Jr., in New York. He has an Ivy League atmosphere, was editor of the Yale Daily News the year before William Buckley, smokes a pipe and is 31 years old.

I have a photostat of an official memorandum, dated December 3, 1956, formally suspending operations as of that date.

IT GOES SO far as to recommend substitute projects on which the employees could be kept busy.

Nearly a year later, Mr. Walker has just dispatched a special representative, G.A. Trutnovsky, a Czech, to finally "dismantle" the project and dis-

pose of all equipment. He is assigned to do the job in 45 days at an allowance of twenty dollars a day plus transportation.

I asked Mr. Walker about this, because he already had a \$15,000-a-year assistant in Munich, Howard S. Weaver, who has been in charge of the balloon program since its inception. Weaver also is Yale. While Trutnovsky is being sent to Munich, Weaver is being recalled. I asked Mr. Walker why.

He informed me that Weaver's recall is because he and eight other members of the Munich staff were involved in a cigarette black market scandal, about which the German government took a dim view.

The Americans had made a deal with a GI to have him buy the cigarettes for them at the Army post exchange at something less than 25 cents a pack, which is about one-third of what they sell for on the tax-paid German retail market.

THE FREE EUROPE headquarters in New York dispatched its own General Counsel, Richard Greenlee, from New York to defend the nine, his trip costing "several thousand dollars." There also was a German attorney.

All nine were convicted and fined by the German court, and Weaver was "recalled for a new assignment in New York."

The balloon project has the atmosphere of a sort of Yale post-graduate cops-and-robbers club, with a Social Register screening system.

Walker's deputy director is

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THE BALLOON BROKE

somewhat younger than he—John Kirk, also a son of Old Eli, and also a son of Grayson, president of Columbia University. He was hired in August, 1956, this being his first job, at \$5,500 a year. Today he is drawing \$10,500, which seems to demonstrate how fast the modern young man can rise in the world.

Mr. Walker is not very specific about why the year elapsed between the end of the balloon operations and the long-last dismantling. He says it has been a "gradual process," which seems to be a masterpiece of understatement.

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